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The Moyie River Corridor is part of a legacy project. (PHOTO: LACY ROBINSON, IDL)

Legacy program keeps forestlands from being developed

[Marc Lutz](#)//October 21, 2024//

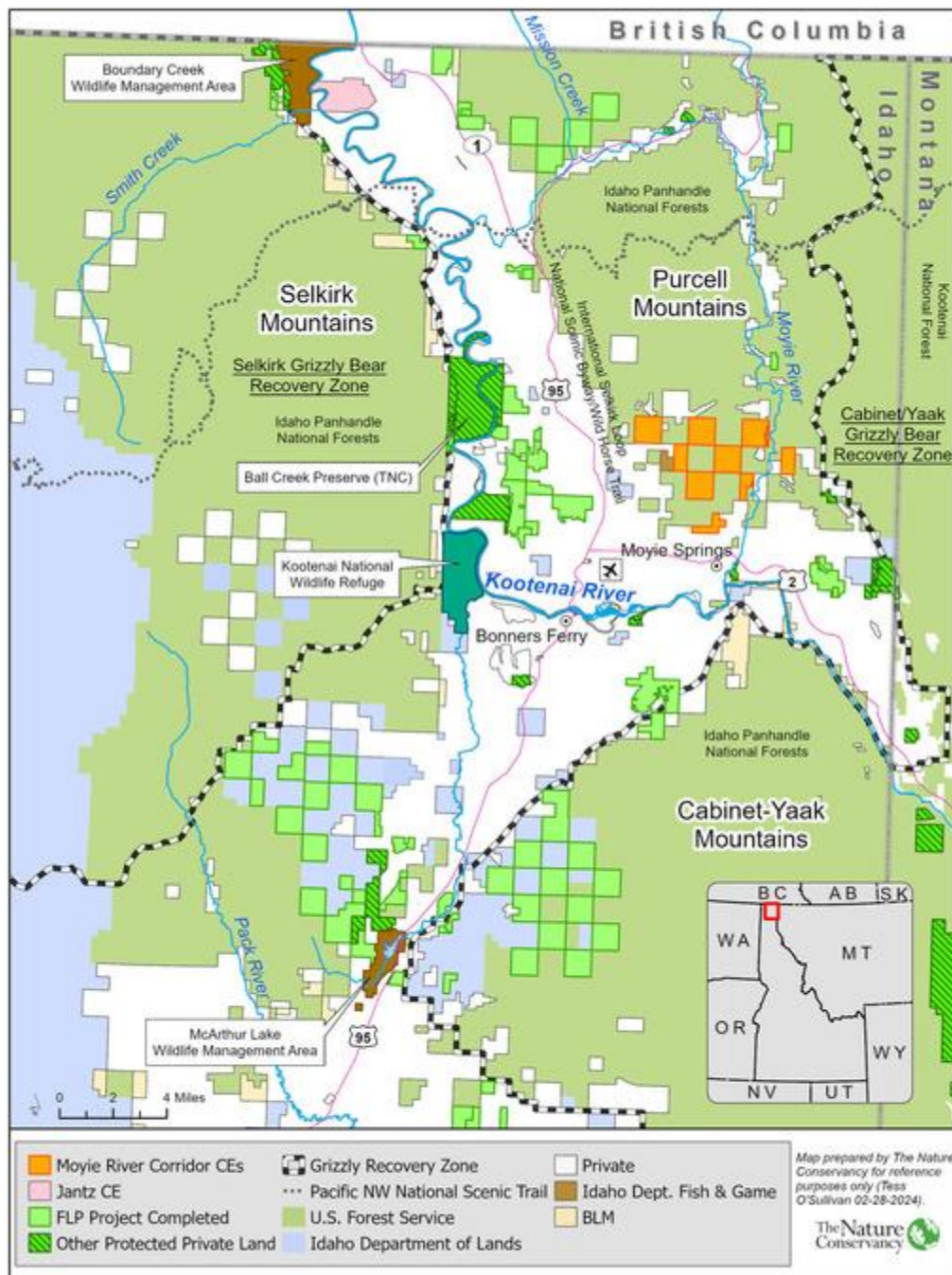
A program meant to preserve working forest lands while creating new recreational opportunities in Idaho will do just that for 3,700 acres of private forest land in Boundary County.

Thanks to a partnership with the [Nature Conservancy](#), the [Idaho Department of Fish and Game](#) and the USDA Forest Service, the Idaho Department of Lands' Forest Legacy Program added six conservation easements in the Moyie River Corridor project.

Multiple tracts of land along Dawson Ridge, which are all privately owned and managed by either Molpus Woodlands Group or Manulife Investment Management, are included in the project.

Project partners stated that participation by private forestland owners in the legacy project will keep the lands from being subdivided and developed and preventing sprawl from occurring into

wildlands. At the same time, it will ensure “a steady, reliable sawlog and fiber supply for industry and future mill infrastructure investments,” and provides unobstructed wildlife migration.



A map displays the areas covered in the legacy program. (ILLUSTRATION: COURTESY OF IDL)

“The Moyie River Corridor project is truly a win-win for the landowners and the people of Idaho,” said Jennifer Barker, program managers for the Forest Legacy Program. “The land remains undeveloped with a beautiful viewshed allowing people to hike, hunt, forage and recreate, while the landowner works the land and helps secure a future for the local timber industry, increasing the likelihood that our local mills will remain open and supplied with wood.”

Tom Sarno, global head of timberland investments at Manulife said the partnerships in such programs are good for the overall state economy.

“These conservation easements are a good example of a public-private partnership bringing benefit to the region by ensuring these lands continue to contribute to the broader economy while also securing public recreational access in perpetuity,” he said.

The legacy forest easements are funded through congressional authorizations and offshore drilling royalties, a statement read. The projects compete with others throughout the country and must be clearly defined before submitting for funding. Landowners must contribute with a 25% match, usually made through tax-deductible donations.

“The project checked a lot of boxes for us in that it conserves important wildlife habitat, while retaining public access and keeping working lands working,” said Sal Palazzolo, IDFG State Wildlife Habitat Program manager. “In past years, these lands had been part of our large tracts access program and IDFG was paying the landowners an annual fee to retain public access, now the access is guaranteed.”